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Document N° : RF. 1414

Documents R.124 et R.125

Procès-verbaux de la 54° conférence du comité central du Plan et des conférences de Speer avec Hitler au sujet du recrutement des travailleurs - 1er mars 1944

Document déposé par le Ministère Public américain
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BE-1414

OFFICE OF U.S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY

Doc. No. R-124 Date 6 October 1945

STAFF EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT (Under following headings):

Title and Nature: Extracts from Speer's Minutes on Deportation and Forced Labor.

Date: 1942, 43, 44 Original ( ) Copy (x) Language: German

LOCATION OF ORIGINAL (also WITNESS if applicable) as of 6 October 1945:

SOURCE OF ORIGINAL:

PERSONS IMPLICATED:

SPEER, Albert; SAUCKEL, Fritz; GOERING, Hermann; HIMMLER, Heinrich; KEITEL, Wilhelm

REFERENCES TO INDEX HEADINGS (Key to Par. nos. of Summary below):

ATROCITIES: Mixed; DEPORTATION; FORCED LABOR; JEWS, PERSECUTION OF

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POINTS (with page references):

Speer's Minutes on his "Conferences with the Fuehrer" and the "Conferences of Central Planning" describe the formulation of various German policies.

In the conferences of Central Planning German industrialists met highest Reich authorities to discuss problems of war economy.

This summary ties together all statements dealing with the recruitment and distribution of labor from the occupied territories and the supply of prisoner-of-war labor.

Speer and Milch were nearly always present at these conferences, Sauckel and Timm very frequently. Representatives of industry were invited to present their claims for forced labor.

I.

Forced Labor and Deportation of the Civil Population from the Occupied Countries.

(1) The methods used in the "Recruiting Campaign". The documents prove that violence was used without scruples to obtain the labor required and that the so-called recruiting agents did not refrain from the most revolting measures.

According to document Ia the Fuehrer ordered that any and all measures of violence should be applied if the voluntary recruitment failed. KEHRL (IIm, p. 1827) describes the recruitment as a compulsory measure and Sauckel states (IIm, p. 1827) that of 5,000,000 foreign workers only 200,000 were volunteers. Timm (IIh, p. 2279) states that much pressure would be needed to obtain the labor required.

Sauckel (IIm, p. 1770) explains that his agents are employing the method of "Shanghaiing".

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Another indication that the policy makers knew there was no real "recruiting", but open deportations can be found in statements that the oppressed populations tried to defend themselves against the methods of these agents and that quite a few of them were shot. (See TIMM IIi, p. 2107, KEHRL IIi, p. 2124, Sauckel IIm, p.1771)

In the interest of the campaign Sauckel (IIm, p.1776) made Laval issue a decree threatening the death penalty for every French official sabotaging the recruitment, and Milch (IIm, p.1815) suggested that a food shortage be provoked in the occupied countries which would influence the campaign favorably.

(2) The extent of the requests for forced labor.

The number of foreign workers deported and compelled to do forced labor amounted to millions. In mass production the foreign workers amounted to about 95% (see III, p. 1863).

In document Ia the Fuehrer tells Speer that about 1 million workers should be supplied within 4 to 5 months. Another million is mentioned in IIi, p. 2113. A yearly estimate of 4,050,000 required for 1944 is mentioned in IIm.

Very often the representatives of the different industries demand the supply of several thousands, often tens of thousands, of this labor per month. Among these workers were also a considerable number of women (see IIi, p. 2109, 2116, III, p. 1863). Most of these were workers from the East. They were preferred because they could be used for the heaviest work.

(3) Deportation of whole populations. There was a plan to deport the whole civil population to which Sauckel refers (IIh, p.2281) which, however, could not be carried out completely. Milch sponsors a plan (IIh, p. 2297) to remove as a rule the civilian population to 100 miles behind the fighting fronts. Sauckel refers to the plan of deportation again in IIm, p.1769 where he complains that he was hampered in carrying out his measures because the army authorities wanted to use these people for labor at the front.

(4) Treatment of civilian forced labor. Concentration camps, Labor Education Camps, SS and police measures were the methods used in dealing with these millions of foreign workers. Concentration camps in the case of slackers (Speer IId, p. 1059), submitting lists of shirkers to Himmler's trustworthy hands (Milch III, p. 1873), sending fugitive workers to educational camps (Rohland IIn, p. 1468) were among the measures recommended.

It seems that about 30 to 40,000 people per month (IIn, p.1468) tried to escape from their places of work.

The conditions of work were not discussed at these conferences except once when Fischer (IIc, p. 1238) stated that the ordinary workers resented it when the foreign workers were put in stables. It is mentioned several times that Italian and Bulgarian workers signed up for a specified time and could not be made to stay on after that time had lapsed. No time limit existed for workers from the East.

II.

Forced Labor supplied by SS

Armament factories which had been erected in not-built-up areas were supplied with forced labor from concentration camps. Himmler regarded the inmates as an SS-asset and claimed therefore a compensation; upon the suggestion made by Speer he was promised a 3-5% share of the output (Ib).

In a conference with Speer the Fuehrer ordered Himmler to collect in Hungary a contingent of 100,000 Jews for forced labor (If).

(continued)
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III.

Forced Labor by Prisoners of War.

(1) The number of the prisoners forced to work, their condition and state of health.

When the labor question was discussed in the conferences of Central Planning it mostly concerned Russian prisoners of war. Though the number of French prisoners was higher, the industrialists always preferred Russians because they could put them to the heaviest work (IIn, p. 1465, IIk, p. 2908).

It was stated by Pleiger (IIn, p. 1465 May 1944) that 800,000 Russian prisoners of war who were used for not so heavy work could be replaced by Italians and the Russians re-directed to other work. In a conference with Speer the Fuehrer ordered that, if there were not sufficient prisoners of war to satisfy the demand, the male population in partisan-areas should be declared prisoners of war and sent to the mines so that a quota of 70,000 per month could be sent to the mines (Ic).

The condition of the prisoners coming from the Stalino district was described by Pleiger as follows: At first they were deprived of their greatcoats and clothing by the Rumanians and Italians. They were so weak that they could not even pass a brick. This was due to the fact that the Fuehrer had taken away the grain basis from these districts (IIc, p. 1235) which apparently meant that the prisoners could not be fed properly in the camps. The miners' union doctors were informed that for the medical examination a different standard was to be applied to prisoners of war from that for German miners (IIa, p. 3062).

(2) The work to which the prisoners were directed.

The Russian prisoners of war were directed not only to agriculture and heaviest work in mining, but also to work in iron and armament industry and even to work as combatants in anti-aircraft (see references below).

As soon as the prisoners of war were brought into the Stalags they were subject to the directions and at the disposal of the Plenipotentiary-General of Manpower (IId).

In June 1943 200,000 Russian prisoners of war fit for the heaviest work were demanded from the Wehrmacht and Armed SS (IIm, p.2908). Pleiger suggested that 150,000 - 320,000 Russian prisoners of war who did work which could be done by Italian workers should be replaced and transferred to coal mines(IIn, p. 1465) 26,000 Russian prisoners of war were working in iron and metal production, 29,000 in the manufacture of iron, steel and metal goods, 63,000 in armaments industry and 10,000 in chemical industry (Speer IIi, p. 2122). In February 1944 the best new engine was made to 88% by Russian prisoners of war labor (Milch IIl, p. 1863). In April 1943 the percentage of Russian prisoners of war employed in armament industry amounted to 30% (Speer IIi, p. 2114).

But the Russian prisoners of war were even compelled to work as anti-aircraft gunners which was described by Milch as "amusing". It was stated that 50,000 would be put to this job and that 30,000 had already been taken (Milch IIh, p. 2298).

(3) The methods of treatment.

If a prisoner of war was not "doing his bit" then the German foremen were instructed to hit and smack them. Engineers who were not hitting the prisoners of war in such cases were threatened with punishment. Severe exception was taken to persons standing up for human rights of prisoners (Milch IIl, p. 1913).

At Goering's wish the direction of the Stalags, with the exception of the British and Americans, was given to the SS to increase the utilisation of manpower (Ie). This, of course, meant increased use of violence.

(Continued)

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But the greatest pressure was brought to bear upon the prisoners by the permanent threat to put slackers or those who had escaped into concentration camps. The SS picked up about 30 to 40,000 prisoners per month (Speer IIn, p. 1483). This is a staggering figure considering how the prisoners were watched and shows how unbearable their treatment must have been. It was suggested by Speer that some "educational work" should be done on them and that they should be put into the factories as convicts (IIn, p. 1483).

The passages quoted above (under I4 of this summary) concerning slackers to be put into concentration camps and to be handed over to Himmler's trustworthy hands apply also to prisoners of war.

Two Russian officers who had taken off with an airplane but crashed were, upon Milch's order, to be hanged in the factory so that their fellow prisoners could see it (II 1, p. 1914).

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Doc. No. R-125

OFFICE OF U.S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY
Date 6 October 1945

1414

STAFF EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT (Under following headings).

Title and Nature: Records of Conferences with Fuehrer signed by Speer.

Date: 1942, 43, 44 Original ( ) Copy (x) Language: German

LOCATION OF ORIGINAL:

SOURCE OF ORIGINAL:

PERSONS IMPLICATED:

SPEER, Albert

REFERENCES TO INDEX HEADINGS (Key to Par. nos. of Summary below):

ANNEXATION OF CONQUERED TERRITORY

NECESSARY PROCESSING TO PUT IN EVIDENTIARY FORM; LEADS:

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POINTS (with page references):

The following quotations deal with German requisitions in occupied territories The extracts under I were taken from Speer's minutes on his meetings with Hitler. They are mostly Hitler's orders which Speer had to execute. The extracts under II are from minutes taken by Speer on meetings of the Central Planning Board.

In document Ia Hitler ordered that rolling stock should be taken away ruthlessly from the occupied countries and that German interests must come first; in Ib he orders also that a discreet inquiry should be made as to how much copper could be obtained from a ruthless removal of church bells and monuments; in Ic that as a rule shortages in the Reich should be remedied at the expense of the occupied territories, that, e.g. if bicycles were short in Germany for armament workers they should be requisitioned in Holland, Belgium, Denmark, etc.; this principle applied also to streetcars and other items; in Id that the Minister for Transport was to be given far reaching powers to confiscate tramcars in occupied territories to satisfy the requirements of bomb damaged German Towns; in Ie that ingots should be shifted speedily from the Donets area and that generally everything not absolutely essential should disappear from there.

In one conference (Ic) Speer expresses fears that the military commanders may not be ruthless enough whereupon Hitler replies he would give orders to make sure that the confiscatory measures would be carried out.

The man to execute the orders concerning tramcars was Ganzenmueller who was present at conference Ia.

The documents under II are extracts from the stenographic transcripts of conferences of the Central Planning Board. In IIa Speer recommends that tramcars in Warsaw, France, etc. should be requisitioned to fill up gaps in Germany. His recommendation was made prior to the above mentioned conferences with the Fuehrer (Ic an Id) relating to tramcars, and it can be concluded that Hitler's order was suggested to him by Speer.

Minutes of Conference at Fuehrer

Headquarters on 24th May 1942

Page 642:

c) Rolling stock is to be taken away from occupied territories without any consideration. I am told by the Reichsmarshall that four express trains run daily between Brussels and Paris. German interests must come first in this case.

Minutes of the Fuehrer's
Conference on 1st, 2nd and 3rd
December at Fuehrer Headquarters.

Berlin, 4th December 1942

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p 424
35) It is to be examined internally - without attracting particular attention in France - how much copper could be obtained by ruthlessly removing church bells and monuments.

signed Speer

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Berlin, 27th April 1943

Minutes on a Conference with the
Fuehrer on 25 April 1943 at
Obersalzberg

P. 314
5) The Fuehrer draws special attention to the fact that occurrence of shortages in the Reich must be remedied at the expense of the occupied territories. When, for instance, armament workers are short of bicycles, one must, to begin with, fall back on bicycles in Holland, Belgium, Denmark etc.

The same holds good for tram cars and other items. He desires that such demands should be submitted to him currently.

He notes my misgivings that the military commanders will not be sufficiently ruthless in the execution, but he rules that this attitude must be neutralized by corresponding orders by himself.

For personal confidential information to Kehrl.

signed Speer

Minutes of the conference with
the Fuehrer on the 13/15.5.1943
in his headquarters.

Fuehrer's Headquarters,
15 May 1943

Pp. 286, 287
2) Tramway cars are urgently needed for bomb damaged towns in the Reich. Apart from the rebuilding programme, which I reported to the Fuehrer as being possible, it will be necessary to transfer tram cars from the occupied territories.

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Even if they cannot immediately be used in German Towns owing to different guage or electrical fittings, it will be easier to have these cars made usable by reconstruction than to have new cars built.
The Fuehrer agrees to confer to the Reichsverkehrsminister (Reich Minister for Transport) far-reaching authority to the effect that he may proceed with confiscating tram cars in the occupied territories.
Monthly reports are to be made to the Fuehrer through my office on the number of tram cars including trailers thus mobilized.
Draft of a warrant is to be submitted. To be discussed with Keitel beforehand.

signed Speer

Conference with the Fuehrer
on 19th-22nd August 1943 Berlin, 23.8.1943

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P. 222
15) The shifting of Rohbloecken (ingots) etc, from the Donets area must be speeded up. The Fuehrer definitely emphasizes that the Donets area must continue to remain in our possession, that however everything that is not absolutely essential must disappear from there in order not to provide the enemy with valuable assistance should circumstances oblige us to evacuate the Donets area. For the Time being no reduction in the work of the factories west of the Dnieper is to be made.

signed Speer

Top Secret State Top Secret

Stenographic notes of the
32nd discussion of the

Central planning of the 4 Years' Plan
Subject: Distribution of Iron

held 12 February 1943, 1600 hours

at the

Reich Ministry for Armament and Munition
Berlin, Pariser Place 3.

Extract from page 2316

Landfried: The Transportation of the worker is then always put forward.
Speer: This is also an urgent necessity. It is only the question whether one could transfer tramway cars and the like from occupied territories, for instance from Warsaw.

Dehrl: The question is whether we can retain an orderly administration according to normal peace-time standards. The demands are in accordance with that. We cannot do it.

Page 2317
Speer: It is another question whether one could take away some tramway cars from for instance Warsaw where they look very well or from other towns in order to use them in Germany. There is also a shortage of cars. Cars are

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being manufactured. In the big, bomb-damaged regions cars are constantly being lost, which have to be replaced. The people have already been to see me several times to receive something. I am sorry I cannot give anything. But I could imagine that particularly from the occupied regions some could be extracted. After all, the tramway traffic in Warsaw is not as important as in Germany. One could also extract some tramway cars from France.

Top Secret

Stenographic Notes

of the
57th Conference

of the

Central Planning

concerning Food, Fertilizers, and Transport

on May 18, 1944, at 1530 hours

Pariser Platz

Page 1563, line 7
"Backe: The grain should be shipped from France to Belgium. France has no box-cars, and the Armed Forces say no. They simply take the grain from civilian stocks, with the result that whole towns are left without bread. Meanwhile they would have 20,000 tons at their disposal if they were willing to go only a few km's, but the Armed Forces refuse to do that".

(Translators note: In the course of the ensuing discussion, Backe proposed some plans to solve these problems. Milch accepted his ideas and summing up the whole situation remarked the following":

Page 1566, line 25
"Milch: Then we have to do that very soon. Nevertheless, I keep telling myself, if only Backe would dare to tell them: I won't sent anything any more, it is there waiting for you. Then if they drew from the civilian population, they would very quickly have to organize transports in case the civilian population got into difficulties."

Fuhrer-Protokolle 1942 — 19 August 1942

Record of conference with the
Fuehrer on 10, 11 and 12 August 1942

P. 514 -16-

Gauleiter Saukel promises to make Russian labor available for the fulfilment of the iron and coal program and reports that -- if required -- he can supply a further million Russian laborers for the German armament industry up to and including Oct. 1942. So far, he has already supplied 1 million for industry and 700,000 for agriculture. In this connection the Fuehrer states that the problem of providing labor can be solved in all cases and to any extent; he authorizes Gauleiter Saukel to take all measures required.

He would agree to any necessary compulsion (Zwangamasarnhmen) in the East as well as in the West if this question could not be solved on a voluntary basis.

signed Speer

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Fuehrer-Protokolle 1942 19th August 1942

Records of conferences with the
Fuehrer on 10, 11 and 12 August 1942

42) Gauleiter Saukel promises to make Russian labor available for the fulfillment of the iron and coal program and reports that--if required--he can supply a further million Russian laborers for the German armament industry up to and including Oct 1942. So far, he has already supplied 1 million for industry and 700,000 for agriculture. In this connection the Fuehrer states that the problem of providing labor can be solved in all cases and to any extent; he authorizes Gauleiter Saukel to take all measures required.

He would agree to any necessary compulsion(Zwangmassnahmen) in the East as well as in the West, if this question would not be solved on a voluntary basis. signed Speer.

Fuehrer-Protokolle 1942

Minutes of conferences with the Fuehrer on September 20, 21st and 22 1942. Berlin, 29 Sept 1942

36) I pointed out to the Fuehrer that, apart from an insignificant amount of work, no possibility exists of organizing armament production in the concentration camps, because:

1. the machine tools required are missing.
2. there are no suitable premises.

Both these assets would be available in the armament industry if use would be made of them as a second shift.

The Fuehrer agrees to my proposal, that the numerous factories set up outside towns for ARP reason, should release their workers for supplementing the second shift in town factories and should in return be supplied with labor from the concentration camps--also two shifts.

I pointed out to the Fuehrer the difficulties which I expect to encounter if Reichsfuehrer SS Himler should be able, as he requests, to exercise authoritative influence over these factories. The Fuehrer, too, does not consider such an influence necessary.

The Fuehrer however agrees that Reichsfuehrer SS Himler should draw advantages from making his prisoners available; he should get equipment for his division.

I suggest to give him a share in kind(war equipment) in ratio to the working hours done by his prisoners. A 3-5% share is discussed, the equipment also being calculated according to working hours. The Fuehrer would agree to such a solution.

The Fuehrer is prepared to order the additional delivery of this equipment and weapons to the SS, according to the list submitted to him.

signed Speer.

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TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT NO. R-125
CONTINUED--

STATE TOP SECRET

Berlin 10 July 1943

Discussion with the Fuehrer
8 July 1943

17) The Fuehrer laid down in the coal discussion that 70,000 Russian prisoners of war fit for mining work should be sent each month to the mines. He also pointed out that an approximate minimum of 150,000-200,000 fit Russian prisoners of war must be earmarked for the mines in order to obtain the required number of men suitable for this work.

If the Russian prisoners of war cannot be released by the Army the male population in the partisan infested areas should without distinction be proclaimed prisoners of war and sent off to the mines.

The Fuehrer ordered at the same time that these prisoners of war who are not fit for the mines should immediately be placed with the iron industries, in manufacturing and supply insustries and in the armament industry.

The Fuehrer further ordered that he should receive a monthly report giving:

A. the total number of Russian prisoners of war

B. the number of Russian prisoners of war fit for mining.

who have been made available for the mines and a report addressed to Field Marshal Keitel as to why the remainder could not be used. The joint report of Sauckel and Pleiger is also to be sent to me

signed Speer

Ministeramt (Minister's Office)

Records of the discussions in the Fuehrer Headquarters on the 6th and 7th December 1943.

22) Reported to the Fuehrer on a proposal worked out by Dr. Carl, relating to "Aktion Russland" (Action Russia) and left detailed data to him for examination. The Fuehrer points out again that my suggestion was good, that only a surprise action is worthwhile and that subdivision into three separate actions, as proposed by the Luftwaffe, does not appear suitable.

signed Speer

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Points from the Conference (Saur with the Fuehrer On the 5th March 1944, jointly with General Feldmarschal Milch, GeneralDer Flieger Bodenschatz, Oberst von Below.

Berlin,
6 March 1944

18)
"Told the Fuehrer of the Reich Marshal's wish for the further utilization of the production power of prisoners of war by giving the direction of the Stalag to the SS with the exception of the English and Americans. The Fuehrer considers the proposal good and has asked Colonel von Below to arrange matters accordingly."

Prepared by Saur
Seen by Speer.

Minutes of Discussions with
the Fuehrer
on 6th and 7th April 1944

State Decret

Berlin, 9th April 1944.

The Director of the
Technical office
TA Ch S.Kr.

17)
Suggested to the Fuehrer that, due to lack of builders and equipment, the second big building project should not be set up in German territory, but in close vicinity to the border on suitable soil (preferable on gravel base and with transport facilities) on French, Belgian or Dutch territory. The Fuehrer agrees to this suggestion if the works should be set up behind the fortified zone. For the suggestion of setting this plant up in French territory speaks mainly of the fact that it would be much easier to procure the necessary workers. Nevertheless, the Fuehrer asks an attempt be made to set up the second works in a safer area, namly in the Protectorate. If it should prove impossible there too, to get hold of the necessary workers, the Fuehrer himself will contact the Reichfuehrer "SS" and will give an order that the required 100,000 men are to be made available by bringing in Jews from Hungary. Stressing the fact that the building organization of the (Industriegemeinschaft Schlesien Silesia) was a failure, the Fuehrer demands that these works must be built by the O.T. exclusively and that the workers should be made available by the Reichsfuehrer "SS". He wants to hold a meeting shortly in order to discuss details with all the men concerned".

signed Speer

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